

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES****Office of the Secretary****Office of Public Health and Science; Availability of Crisis Response Teams for Technical Assistance**

**AGENCY:** Office of Public Health and Science, in the Office of the Secretary (OPHS/OS), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**AUTHORITY:** 42 U.S.C. 241, 243.

**SUMMARY:** The Office of Public Health and Science announces the availability of technical assistance teams, known as crisis response teams, to provide multidisciplinary technical assistance to localities most highly impacted by HIV/AIDS within racial and ethnic minority communities. The HIV/AIDS epidemic disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minority populations nationally, with major metropolitan areas and urban centers most heavily impacted by high AIDS case rates and large numbers of people living with HIV disease. The crisis response team would work in partnership with local community officials, public health personnel and community leaders to further describe the local HIV/AIDS epidemic and its impact upon vulnerable populations, assist them in identifying potential strategies to enhance prevention efforts, and maximize community health and support service networks and access to care. Findings of the crisis response team will be provided to local elected and health department officials, and to the HIV community planning groups and planning councils for their consideration and action. The crisis response teams must be requested by the chief elected official of an eligible jurisdiction, in collaboration with the director of the local health department and State/local HIV community planning groups and HIV planning councils.

**DATES:** Letters of request from localities requesting to apply for a crisis response team must be received on or before January 25, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Letters of request should be submitted to: Director, Office of HIV/AIDS Policy, Office of Public Health and Science, Room 736-E, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20201.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Office of HIV/AIDS Policy, Office of Public Health and Science, telephone (202) 690-5560.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Eligibility criteria for localities wishing to apply

for a crisis response team are: (1) Eligible metropolitan statistical areas with populations of 500,000 or greater; (2) 1,500 or greater living AIDS cases among African Americans and Hispanic Americans; (3) at least 50 percent of living AIDS cases within the MSA are African American and Hispanic Americans combined; and (4) the chief elected official of the MSA, in collaboration with appropriate health officials, must submit a written request to the Secretary requesting a crisis response team. In the case that multiple jurisdictions are represented within an eligible MSA, the chief elected official of the city or urban county that administers the public health agency that provides outpatient and ambulatory services to the greatest number of individuals with AIDS, as reported to and confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the eligible area is the individual responsible for making a written request to the Secretary. This letter of request must indicate the support of the Director of the jurisdiction's local health department for the crisis response team, a description of the key issues, and a confirmation of the commitment of local officials to working with the communities most impacted by HIV/AIDS over a sustained period. Smaller communities with under 500,000 population in which the demographics of the HIV epidemic are rapidly changing may submit a letter of request following the process outlined above; these requests will be considered separately. The Virgin Islands will be separately considered for a crisis response team given the unique nature of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in this geographic area. Metropolitan statistical areas qualifying under criteria one through three include: Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Chicago, IL; Detroit, MI; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Houston, TX; Jersey City, NJ; Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA; Miami, FL; New Haven-Bridgeport-Danbury-Waterbury, CT; New York, NY; Newark, NJ; Philadelphia, PA; San Juan-Bayamon, PR; Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV; and West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL. The Department will initially deploy crisis response teams to three jurisdictions and evaluate their effectiveness, and respond to further requests for this technical assistance within its capacity to assemble the appropriate expert teams.

Dated: December 16, 1998.

**Glen E. Harelson,**

*Acting Director, Office of HIV/AIDS Policy.*

[FR Doc. 98-34064 Filed 12-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160-17-M

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES****Office of the Secretary****Notice of Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability**

**AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

The Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability will meet on January 28, 1999 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and January 29, 1999, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The meeting will take place in the Crown Plaza Hotel, 14th and K Streets NW, Washington, DC 20005. The meeting will be entirely open to the public.

The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the options for implementation and evaluation of the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee regarding hepatitis C lookback at its November 24, 1998 meeting, and consideration of such Old and New Business as time permits.

Prospective speakers should notify the Executive Secretary of their desire to address the Committee and should plan for no more than 5 minutes of comment.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Stephen D. Nightingale, M.D., Executive Secretary, Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability, Office of Public Health and Safety, Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20201. Phone (202) 690-5560 FAX (202) 690-6584 e-mail SNIGHTIN@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Dated: December 17, 1998.

**Stephen D. Nightingale,**

*Executive Secretary, Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability.*

[FR Doc. 98-34065 Filed 12-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160-17-M

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES****Administration on Aging****Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Report**

In compliance with section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 concerning the opportunity for public comment on proposed collections of information, the Administration on Aging (AoA) seeks to collect and publish periodic summaries of proposed projects. These proposed projects constitute an evaluation of the Administration on Aging's Operation